

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

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FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

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INFO USINT CAIRO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 0121

STATE ALSO FOR T/IEP

E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, FI

SUBJ: EGYPTIAN PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION VISITS HELSINKI, JAN 15-17

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: TWO-MEMBER EGYPTIAN PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION
MET WITH PRESIDENT URHO KEKKONEN, TOP GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, AND
WITH FINNISH PARLIAMENTARIANS. FOLLOWING THESE MEETINGS THEY HELD
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EXTENDED ONE-HOUR PRESS INTERVIEW. THEY EXPLAINED THAT REDUCED

OIL PRODUCTION WAS ARAB DECISION BUT PRICE OF OIL IS DETERMINED BY OPEC COUNTRIES AND CONSUMING INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES, NOT BY ARAB WORLD. EXPRESSED HOPE FINLAND COULD JOIN IN A NORDIC DECLARATION ON NEAR EAST SITUATION WHICH WOULD "OUTLINE THEIR UNIFORM ACTION". THEY SUGGESTED NEED FOR STRENGTHENING BILATERAL RELATIONS AND SAID THEY WISHED TO DEVELOP THEIR REGION THROUGH COOPERATION AMONG EGYPTIAN LABOR, FINNISH TECHNOLOGY, AND ARAB CAPITAL. END SUMMARY.

2. PARLIAMENTARY VICE-CHAIRMAN OF EGYPTIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY GAMAL EL OTIEFY AND ABU BAKR EL BASEL MET WITH PRESIDENT URHO KEKKONEN, PRIME MINISTER KALEVI SORSA, FOREIGN MINISTER AHTI KARJALAINEN, MINISTER OF INDUSTRY JAN-MAGNUS JANSON, SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT V. J. SUKSELAINEN, SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY CHAIRMAN RAFAEL PAASIO, AND OTHER MEMBERS OF FINNISH GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENT. IN EXTENDED ONE-HOUR PRESS INTERVIEW AT END OF VISIT, EL OTIEFY MENTIONED HIS TALKS WITH PRESIDENT KEKKONEN WITH SATISFACTION AND EXPRESSED HOPE FINLAND WILL TAKE A "NEUTRAL" POSITION TO SEE THAT UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242 WILL BE CARRIED OUT. SUGGESTED THAT A JOINT STATEMENT OF NORDIC POSITION ON THE NEAR EAST SITUATION WOULD NOT PREJUDICE PEACE KEEPING EFFORTS IN THAT AREA. REFERRING TO OIL, HE DIFFERENTIATED BETWEEN THE OIL PRODUCTION CUT-BACK WHICH WAS AN ARAB DECISION AND THE QUESTION OF RISING OIL PRICES. FOR THE LATTER, HE SAID THAT WAS NOT OF ARAB DOING BUT ONE IN WHICH THE OPEC COUNTRIES WERE INVOLVED, THAT IRAN WAS FIRST TO RAISE PRICES AND THAT OPEC INCLUDES MANY COUNTRIES FRIENDLY TO THE WEST. HE NOTED THAT PRICE INCREASES FOR OIL WAS ANTICIPATED SOME TIME AGO AND LIKENED THE HIKE IN OIL PRICES AS NOT TOO DIFFERENT FROM HIGHER WHEAT PRICES AND UPWARD TREND OF ALL RAW MATERIALS. HE EMPHASIZED THAT OIL PRICES ARE IN FACT DETERMINED BY THE INDUSTRIALIZED OIL CONSUMING COUNTRIES. REVERTING TO THE OIL CUT-BACK, HE SAID IT WAS EQUAL TO ABOUT 15 PERCENT COMPARED TO OUTPUT IN MID-1973, THAT THIS WAS EQUIVALENT TO ONLY ABOUT 6-7 PERCENT OF TOTAL OIL OUTPUT AND SUCH A CUT COULD HAVE BEEN MET BY OIL SAVING MEASURES. THUS, THE ARABS SHOULD NOT BE BLAMED FOR THE OIL SHORTAGE.

3. FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCE CONFIRMED THAT IN TALKS WITH CHIEF OF COMMERCIAL DEPARTMENT (ARVO RYTKONEN), IL OTIEFY REPEATED IN GENERAL POINTS HE HAD MADE DURING THE ABOVE PRESS INTERVIEW. SOURCE CONFIDENTIAL

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SAID THERE WAS NO NEGOTIATION OF ANY KIND AND NONE WAS INTENDED BECAUSE THE EGYPTIAN VISITORS ARE NOT A PART OF THE GOVERNMENT. THE VISITORS CONFIRMED THAT FINLAND IS ON THE LIST OF "FRIENDLY" COUNTRIES AND THAT FINNISH OIL SHORTAGES MIGHT BE NEGOTIATED WITH THE ARAB COUNTRIES, SAUDI ARABIA AND DUWAIT. REGARDING THE MEETING OF OIL CONSUMING COUNTRIES AT THE INVITATION OF PRESIDENT NIXON, SOURCE SAID THAT THE EGYPTIANS REFERRED TO SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S RECENT SPEECH REGARDING "POSSIBLE USE OF FORCE"

AND COMMENTED THAT THEY DID NOT KNOW FOR WHAT PURPOSE THAT STATEMENT WAS MADE BUT IT WAS MOST UNFORTUNATE AND CONFERENCE THEREFORE WILL BE LOOKED AT WITH SUSPICION. SOURCE SAID WITH RESPECT TO A POSSIBLE JOINT NORDIC STATEMENT ON THE NEAR EAST SITUATION, THE EGYPTIANS WERE INFORMED THAT THE NORDIC COUNCIL WITH WHICH FINLAND WORKS IS NOT A BODY WHICH ENDEAVORS TO OBTAIN JOINT STATEMENTS ON FOREIGN POLICY. ACCORDING TO THE SAME SOURCE, EL OTIEFY'S PRESENTATION TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE REPRESENTATIVES MIGHT BE CHARACTERIZED AS HAVING BEEN REASONABLE WITH NO CRITICISM DIRECTED AT ANY COUNTRY, AND HIS STATEMENTS WERE SOLID.

4. COMMENT: THE FINNISH GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENTARY MEMBERS GAVE THE EGYPTIAN VISITORS RED-CARPET TREATMENT AND THEY UNDOUBTEDLY HOPE THAT THIS SHOW OF FRIENDSHIP WILL NOT BE LOST WHEN THE VISITORS RETURN TO EGYPT. THE EGYPTIAN PRESENTATION IN HELSINKI APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO TAKE THE MONKEY OFF THE BACK OF THE ARAB WORLD WITH RESPECT TO RISING OIL PRICES WHICH IS OF PRIMARY CONCERN TO THE FINNISH GOVERNMENT AND THE PUBLIC.

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